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SUBJECT: DEMARCHE TO AUSTRIA: 2007 LIBERIA PARTNERS FORUM

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¶1. A/DCM presented reftel demarche on December 27 to Carolina Gudenus, the Austrian MFA's DAS-level Africa Director. We stressed the need for high-level engagement in the February 2007 Liberia Partners' Forum, pointing out that Secretary Rice, Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and

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World Bank President Paul Wolfowitz would open the meeting. We reviewed President Sirleaf's accomplishments to date, and focussed on the Liberia's continuing need for financial assistance.

¶2. Gudenus said the situation in Liberia was a matter of interest to Austria. However, she said Liberia was not among the "priority countries" to which Austria devotes the bulk of its international assistance. (Note: Austria seeks to maximize the impact of its assistance by channeling funds to long-term programs in a small number of recipient countries. End note.) It was likely that Austria would cover the February meeting through its Embassy in Washington, she said. Phillips